

2020 Spring Elections

RUNNING FOR OFFICE IN THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE

Presented by: City of Milwaukee Election Commission

The process of running for office in the City of Milwaukee is guided by Wisconsin Election and Campaign Laws, chapters 5-12 and the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC). An important role of the Milwaukee Election Commission is to provide information and assistance to any person interested in running for public office in the City of Milwaukee.

However, as per Wisconsin state law: **any person interested in running for office has the burden and responsibility of understanding and complying with candidate filing and campaign finance reporting requirements.** Most information on candidate registration filing requirements, including nomination papers, can be found in chapter 8 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Comprehensive instructions on completing a campaign finance report can be found in chapter 11 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

State law and local ordinances require the completion of several forms when running for office. Each of these forms can be downloaded and printed from the City of Milwaukee Election Commission's website milwaukee.gov/election or a packet of these forms and instructions may be purchased from the Election Commission for \$25.00.

Step 1: File Campaign Registration Statement (Form CF-1)

Candidates are prohibited from campaign fundraising or incurring campaign expenses until this form has been filed with the Election Commission. This form is due no later than 5pm on Tuesday, January 7, 2020. The form requires you to:

- Identify the office you will be pursuing.
- List the bank information for your campaign finance account.
- Provide the name and contact information of your campaign treasurer. *You may act as your own campaign treasurer. However, due to the complexity of completing the forms correctly, the Election Commission encourages you to select someone for this position that has a good familiarity with Excel spreadsheets and tracking expenses and revenue.*

Any changes to the information submitted on Form CF-1 must be reported through the submission of an amended form within 10 days of the change.

Step 2: File Declaration of Candidacy (EL-162)

- You are required to submit the completed Declaration of Candidacy no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2020:

Step 3: Collect your Nomination Signatures.

- You may begin collecting signatures for your Nomination Papers no earlier than **Sunday, December 1, 2019**. Completed nomination papers must be submitted to the Election Commission no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2020. Signatures collected after this date will not be counted.
- Read all instructions relating to the distribution of nomination papers to ensure that each page of your nomination signatures meets circulating requirements.
 - All nomination signatures will be reviewed by the Election Commission during the period of January 8 – January 10, 2020. If a signer's address is illegible or invalid, or the person resides outside of the area represented by the officeholder, the signature will be disqualified. *While it is not required, you are encouraged to collect at least 100 signatures more than the minimum requirement. You are also encouraged to use the "Where Do I Vote" program on the Election Commission's website, milwaukee.gov/election, to verify the addresses included on your nomination papers.*
 - During this period (January 8 – January 10, 2020), nomination papers may also be challenged by the public, including other candidates running for the same office.
 - If signatures on your nomination papers are disqualified by the Election Commission, or challenged by a member of the public, you will have a three day period, starting with the date the challenge was issued, to submit a written rebuttal to rehabilitate a disqualified signature, or respond to a challenge. Your written rebuttal must be provided on a sworn affidavit.
 - *Please make sure that you check your phone messages and email during this time and that you respond quickly to requests for information. Failure to respond to messages may result in a finding of insufficient signatures.*

Step 4: Complete the City of Milwaukee Statement of Economic Interests.

- Municipal candidates must submit a *Statement of Economic Interests (SEI)* no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 10, 2020 (Chapter 303-11-4 Code of Ethics).

Step 5: Certification by the Election Commission

- If your nomination papers are complete (there are a sufficient number of valid signatures) and all other filing requirements have been met, your nomination papers will be certified as sufficient by the Election Commission and your name will appear on the ballot. If there are not enough valid signatures on your nomination papers or you did not complete all filing requirements, your name will not appear on the ballot.
- If more than two candidates are certified for one office, all certified candidates for that office will appear on the ballot for the February 18, 2020 Spring Primary. The candidates receiving the highest and second highest number of votes in the Spring Primary will advance to the April 7, 2020 Spring Election.
- The order of candidate names on the ballot is determined through a random drawing selection process. Notice of the drawing is provided to all candidates and the public is invited to witness this process.
- NOTE: You may not remove your name from the ballot once your nomination papers have been certified.

Step 6: Submit Campaign Finance Reports

- Unless you have declared exemption (you do not expect to raise or spend an aggregate of over \$2,000 on your campaign), you are required to file campaign finance reports. We will email or mail a reminder prior to each filing due date as indicated on the Campaign Finance Report Filing schedule. However you are responsible for filing a campaign finance report whether or not you receive the reminder. Campaign finance schedules and reporting requirements can be complex and require significant attention to detail and an ability to learn and understand reporting instructions. You are encouraged to select a campaign treasurer that is reliable and organized. All reports must be complete, accurate and meet full public disclosure requirements.